Ripples in the rock pool: Developing new resources to support the transition to rural and remote Allied Health practice

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In 2013 Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH) and the Centre for Remote Health (CRH) collaborated to develop additional modules to expand the online Supporting the Transition of Allied Health Professionals to Remote & Rural Practice training package. The original package had been like a stone thrown in a rock pool, the word had spread like ripples and the site receives around 19,000 hits per month. Clearly people wanted more so we formed a steering committee with experts from each State and Territory to see what we could do.

The sun shone down on our rock pool in the form of a RHCE2 grant and we were able to harness our tidal energy to develop four additional modules: Working as a Team in Remote and Rural Health, Healthcare prioritisation, Rural and Remote Outreach, and Communication in Rural and Remote Allied Health

Working groups were established for each module; each was like an ecosystem in the rock pool. Members were experts in their field, no one person could have done the whole thing, but together we made it work. The star fish in each of the groups was the presence of the learning design consultant, adding colour and movement to the content. The project got watered and replenished at the right time from the steering committee who were like the tide coming in with fresh ideas

We asked SARRAH members and students to peer into our rock pools to test out the material, turn over the shells and anemones, and let us know how they were working. The modules have now ‘gone live’ on SARRAH’s updated e-learning platform.

This paper will look at the critical factors for success in developing and sustaining a national e-resource as well as describe future plans for further development of the national training resource.